

## A LEGEND OF THE LAKE.

BY C. L. FAIGER.

Far to the north, where the blue mountains break  
Their rugged lines against the horizon,  
Lies a lake, a lake, a lake,  
Its silvery inlets sparkling in the sun.

Its silvery inlets thread the mountain sides,  
Descend the snow-capped ridge a thousand yards,  
Unite, and form a stream that onward glides  
And feeds the lakelet that the forest guards—

And feeds the lakelet that sequestered lies,  
With giant mountains ranged on every side—  
Great barriers, that in wildest grandeur rise,  
As if this vale from the rude world to hide—

As this vale and lake should sacred be  
From all mankind—its waters ever clear,  
No ever near a forest tree,  
No rifle shot to start an antler's deer.

No rifle shot to echo in the forest deep,  
No rouse grim train from his hidden lair;  
A hundred deer in graceful sport to leap,  
Drink at the lake, and stand reflected there—

To drink or browse, along its shore  
The branching antler'd buck and timid doe  
There rest upon the slopes, as herds before  
Have come and gone, and tear no stealthy foe—

Have come and gone; but, ah! a change is near  
No superstitions hold the whites in awe,  
They heed no sacred lake, no spirit deer,  
As did the Indians as his strider law—

As did the Indian ere the white man came;  
Believing that a spirit guarded here,  
He loosed his bow-string, marking not the game,  
And strided more quickly through the shades in fear—

Stride more quickly from the lake and vale,  
Up the steep slopes from that forbidden ground;  
A for he sought the devious trail  
That to his wigwam indirectly wound—

To his wigwam, where his watch-fire burned,  
Led on, and on—far from that blue lake—  
And often, with forboding glance, he turned,  
Then faster still his anxious steps would take.

A mighty stag upon a mountain high,  
With head erect, and ever-hungry ear,  
His antlers limbed against the evening sky,  
Stands motionless, in attitude of fear.

Strange sounds! a rifle's echo on the gale!  
Far distant, yet instinctively he fears;  
The breezes tell an oft-repeated tale:  
The spirit's gone from that lone lake and vale.

Shasta, Cal., December 10th, 1882.

## IRENE.

A Story of the Rio Grande.

BY GEORGE MADEIRA.

I know not why I did! I had no particular business there—except curiosity; there were no mines in the vicinity. I had already visited many of the cave dwellings in Arizona and New Mexico; Coronado's famed cities of Cibola, the Zuni villages, where I gazed in wonder on the pale-faced, white-haired women of the tribe; (Albinos)—wandered through their terraced cities, and saw enough to satisfy an enquiring mind of the descendants of the Montezumas, whose villages line the banks of the Rio Grande.

Be that as it may, the declining summer sun found me dismounting from the cabin deck of a mule, at the interesting Indian village of Cochita.

The Indian Pueblo of Cochita is situated thirty-five miles from Santa Fe, on the west bank of the Rio Grande, and contains Indians of the Agueras stock. Coronado visited it in 1540, and the churches of San Buenaventura were built by the Spanish fathers in 1620. They are a thrifty, intelligent and very pleasant people, who till the fields of the river bottom, and also subsist upon the chase in the neighboring Sierra.

My object on visiting the village was to procure the services of Jose Hilario Montoya, to act as guide through the canyon of the Rio de los Enjoles to the Cueva Pintada (Painted Cave), little dreaming I would on this expedition obtain the facts on which to found the thrilling story which follows this prosaic introduction.

We stopped for the night with Juan Jose Montoya, who was born at Cochita in 1880, a full-blooded Oqueres. He is a man of uncommon intelligence, has taught himself to read and write in Spanish, and is learning English. Although, on account of his own age, he cannot always act as guide, he is better acquainted with the area than any man in the valley of the Rio Grande. Next morning, with Jose, we rode over the rolling volcanic hills for a long day and arrived at the Canyon Rita de los Enjoles. A stream leads down to the Rio Grande. On the north side for miles we had views of ruined cliff-houses and cave dwellings.

The north side is formed of vertical cliffs of volcanic tuff, rising hundreds of feet over steep slopes of debris, and containing a large number of Pueblos or cave dwellings and cliff houses, some of the former in a good state of preservation. The bottom of the canyon is lined with groves of majestic pine trees, among which are seen the stone ruins of numerous dwellings and Estufas, (circular houses). Some of these caves circular tunnels lead up to the surface. The painted cave is a grand portal one hundred feet high, worn out of

the volcanic materials. It forms the center of a pueblo of cave dwellings, now ruined. At an altitude of fifty feet are a series of nude figures, painted red, forming a semi-circle of seventy-five feet. The figures are symbolic of the dances of the Indians, clouds and lightning. Jose Hilario, our guide, the safest and kindest man that can be secured, returned us to the village of Cochita, after an absence of three days. He had visited California, and was an adept in his art, and well informed as to the traditions of his tribe. With the above introduction we sail in:

ATTACK BY INDIANS, THE PURSUIT, THE FIGHT, THE ESCAPE.

I. "Conductor, how long will we be detained at this point?" asked Gustavus Slaughter, as the express train switched on to a side track.

"At least two hours; there has been a slight accident to the train ahead of us," replied the conductor.

"Then I will take a run to the hills," said Gus.

"There are Apaches in this vicinity; it is not safe to leave the road. Should you go return in an hour."

Gus entered the palace car, and soon returned carrying a repeating rifle, and followed by Irene, who insisted on accompanying him.

"We may be attacked by Indians," said Gus, by way of frightening her from going.

"If we are, you can protect me, I do not fear!"

The point where the train was detained was in a deep mountain gorge, through which the Rio Grande winds its way to the sea.

Perpendicular walls rose on either hand for nearly two thousand feet.

At the foot of the giant wall on the right the river skirted the base of the bluff, its waters deep and sluggish.

Slaughter and Irene, by taking a circuitous route, climbed to the top of the bluff, on the right and opposite side of the river.

When they arrived at the summit they found a level mesa stretching away to the distant Saddle-Fly mountains. The palm-like amole waved their blossoming tufts in the gentle zephyr. Magney plants, and the fluted gigantic ceras, stood in silent grandeur, while wondrous varieties of blooming cactus exhaled their fragrance on the air. Short mountain chains bound the horizon on every hand, except where the river wound its course, its banks lined with Palo verde, mesquite and cottonwood trees.

As the lovers—for such was their relation—walked slowly over the plain, talking of the hopeful future, an antelope sprang from a clump of cactus, and jumping a few steps it stood gazing on the lovers, only as an antelope can gaze under like circumstances.

It was the work of a moment for Gus to bring his rifle to position and fire the unsophisticated gentle beast to the happy land of Canaan. They approached the slain animal, and as the distance from the train was not great Slaughter proposed carrying it in.

While preparing the animal for transportation, Irene was looking off over the mesa, gazing at some moving objects not far from them, in the high cactus.

"Gus, love, there are more deer!"

"Where?" he asked.

"There; moving through the tall cactus."

"Irene, those are not deer but Indians. We are lost!"

As he spoke, the Indians arose with a yell, and Slaughter found that they were surrounded on three sides, with the perpendicular wall of over a thousand feet on their front.

"Run toward the river, Irene, I will protect you. There are but seventeen, and I have twenty shots."

The Indians now began to fire and pursue. Gus and Irene dodged the bullets—long practice had enabled Slaughter to tell by the sound the direction of the balls. They had now reached the verge of the giant wall.

The Indians on the right and left had also reached the same point.

"Gustavus, my darling, we are captured; there is no escape. We cannot go over the cliff!"

"True!" he replied; but as he spoke the ground gave way beneath the feet of Irene, and she quickly disappeared from view.

"She is lost!" he cried, "and what is life to me? But I will make those red devils pay dearly for this; and at the same time dodging the seventeen bullets fired by the infuriated savages, he sprang boldly over the cliff.

II.

Irene when she found herself sinking, thought the bluff had caved away with her, but it was not so.

The material of the bluff was a calcareous limestone, which had been worn by the action of the elements into pot-holes and tunnels. Irene

found herself gliding swiftly but safely down a circular tunnel, a few feet in diameter, its sides polished as smooth as marble.

Finding she was in no immediate danger, she mused: "I wonder where poor Gus is! If he killed all those Indians? If he will get to the train before I do? If we won't both be late? If the conductor will wait, and what the fare is by this road, and why does not the ticket man come around?"

"What if the tunnel should suddenly stop—oh, here I am!"

III.

Old Joe Milford and his partner lived in a cave near the banks of the Rio Grande.

The river being deep at this point, Joe and his partner had selected this cave as a place of safety from the attacks of Indians.

Above and below the cave, which occupied an elevated ledge of about half an acre in extent, the waters washed the steep walls of the bluff. A boat offered means of egress, and the railroad track swept by on the opposite side of the river.

At the rear of the cave a small cavity or recess in the rock, from which leading up above was a circular tunnel. This singular shaft was inclined at an angle of about forty-five degrees and the sides worn smooth by the action of water which had at some distant day poured down to the river. Aztec figures adorned the walls, proving the cave had at one time been inhabited.

When Joe and his "Pard" moved into the natural fortress, they built a fire in this fire-place, and to their astonishment they found it drew splendidly.

Having thrown on a large pile of wood and ignited it, the fire increased the draft to such an extent that wood and all went up the flue.

To overcome this difficulty, the fire was built in the center of the cavern, when the natural chimney was found to work like a charm, and the pans and kettles were set back in the recess behind the fire. The ashes also found a resting place with the pans.

On the day of the Indian surprise, related above, Joe and Sam were seated at the rude table, eating their dinner, when the conversation turned on spiritualism.

"No, Sam, I don't believe in such things. Those people, in olden times may have seen them, but I have my doubts."

"Joe, I could tell a circumstance that would convince you, that is, if you would believe me."

"Sam, you know I would; you have never deceived me."

"Yes, Joe; spirits from the other world have often appeared, even in the bright light of day."

"Well, I would like to see one."

"If you did, Joe, you would say there was some deception, even if one appeared before us now."

"Not Sam, if you could call one from the misty deep, I would be convinced and believe."

"Well, Joe, suppose we call for some."

"Why, I never thought of that. But do you think they would come?"

"We can try! Go ahead, Joe."

"No, Sam, you first; I was never in the spirit business."

"Well, here we go for a private seance, as the professionals call it."

"Are there any spirits present, if so, please reveal yourselves?" said Sam, in a loud voice.

Suddenly a cloud of ashes rose from the old fire-place; a shower of pots and pans flew out over the floor of the cave, as Irene finished her journey, and shot out into the center of the cavern in a sitting posture.

The two men gazed but for a moment, and then quickly deserted the cave.

As they appeared on the outside, shots were heard over head; in rapid succession seventeen shots were fired apparently in the air, and a man with the speed of a meteor, or more like the arch fiend in his descent from heaven, flashed through the air and landed in the river.

When Gustavus Slaughter unhesitatingly leaped over the cliffs, to the amazement of the Indians, and as he was falling, he turned, raised his Winchester to his shoulder and pulled the trigger. An Indian toppled over with a bullet hole through his left eye, and while he kept falling, Gus kept pulling the trigger, and seventeen redskins and bullets through their left eyes were falling over the cliff after him. The eighteenth shot only carried away an Indian's nose, as the air was so full of falling Indians that his aim was a little confused.

He struck feet foremost in the water, swam to the cave, met Irene just as she emerged from the door of the cavern—a little the worse for wear—when they bid the honest miners farewell, crossed the river, arriving at the train after an absence of only fifteen minutes.

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